
SEEKING THE SIDHAS

Ramalinga
Adigal



AGATHIYAN
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Seeking the Sidhas - Ramalinga Adigal

Cover: Painting of Ramalinga Adigal

The message of the world's great upanishadic sages:

Death is not your final end.

Do not give way to despair.

You are not destined to be subject to this play of dualities forever.

There is the Supreme Being, The very perfection of existence, which you can reach in this very mortal life and where you can find life beyond death and complete fulfillment of your ideal.

Therein is the culmination of your knowledge, therein is the consummation of your love, therein is complete rest and therein dwells unruffled peace.

There shines the light that never fails, and there abides joy unbounded.

How can man reach that?

Through this very life, by regulating this mortal life he can reach the immortal.

Source: Swami Satprakashananda in 'Meditation- Its Process, Practice, and Culmination'

This message echoes throughout Ramalinga Adigal's THIRUARUTPA. The THIRUARUTPA is a compilation of the moment to moment experiences and transformation that Adigal underwent in his search for immortality in this very life.

Preface

Sethu from my office passed me a cassette containing songs from the compilation “THIRUARUTPA”. These songs were written by Ramalinga Adigal. After listening to these songs I was attracted to the teachings of Ramalinga Adigal. I had to know more about this saint who was also known as Vallalar. I searched for material on him.

Ramalinga Adigal lived only as recent as the nineteen century (5th October 1823 to 30th January 1874). Out of compassion for fellow beings, he built the Dharma Salai to feed the hungry. He envisioned and built the Sathya Gnana Sabai where he worshipped God in the form of LIGHT and called him Arutperunjhoti Andavar.

Ramalinga Adigal walked the path of the Sidhas. He revealed his experiences as songs. He poured his devotion in these verses that came to be compiled as the “THIRUARUTPA”. When one reads the THIRUARUTPA he would understand the transformation that took place in Adigal both physically and also in the perception of God. One would realize the amount of gratitude he had for God too.

In these songs Ramalinga Adigal depicts his journey and the transformation he underwent from external worship into internal worship and beyond. These songs portray his transformation from man to divine and to LIGHT.

Ramalinga Adigal performed the miracle of dematerializing himself on 30th January 1874.

Gnanabharathi in his book, “TAMIL MANNIN THANTHAI” writes that Ramalinga Adigal materialized again just for his disciple Kalpathu Aiya in 1902. Kalpathu Aiya who was overjoyed in seeing Ramalinga Adigal appear before him dropped his body. Adigal laid Kalpathu Aiya in Samadhi before dematerializing again.

Such was the grace of the Guru Ramalinga Adigal that he chose to appear before his disciple Kalpathu Aiya after twenty-eight years to see to his (Kalpathu Aiya) final rites.

Contents

Preface	5
Introduction	9
Search for the Divine	13
The End of the Path	17
Be Grateful	27
Towards Union with God	31
Various Bodies	35
The Transformation of the Body.....	45
The Perfected Body	47
Union With God	49

Introduction

Many a saint has often mentioned the human birth as the highest amongst all births.

In Adi Sankarar's words: "Only through gods grace may we obtain the three rarest gifts; human birth, the longing for liberation, and discipleship to an illumined teacher".

Swami Chidvilasananda in "INNER TREASURES" a Siddha Yoga Publication, 1995, (32) mirrors Sankara's thoughts.

The Indian scriptures teach that earth is the place where you come to work out all your karma, the consequences of your actions, both good and bad. This is where you have the opportunity to learn the greatest lessons and ascend to the highest awareness. Even celestial beings want to take birth in this place. It is the work of the saints to awaken people from samsara, the world of the wandering, from this chakra, this wheel, the cycle of birth and death.

Saint Manikavachagar expounds in his Thiruvachakam - Sivapurana - that man having taken birth as grass, worm, trees, various animals, stones, rocks and pebbles, various creatures, asuras and devas, after having taken all these births, finally submits to god.

Shantideva, the eight century Indian saint wrote,

'Human birth is a rare gift for only as a human can you are devoted to god, the creator. The body is the vehicle

for longevity, while the spirit is the vehicle for immortality. The soul yearns to be free, and through our becoming aware of this we undergo what the mystics call awakening where we then begin to center our life on a high spiritual ideal. A new aspiration is born in the soul, which frees the need of a larger draught of air, a more expansive horizon, and which desires direct contact with the indefinite existence.'

Shantideva warns us,

'These human leisure, opportunities, and faculties are very rare to obtain and easily lost; if one squanders the chance to fulfill the aim of human life, how will such an opportunity arise again?'

Swami Muktananda writes in "WHERE ARE YOU GOING? A Guide to the Spiritual Journey" Published by SYDA Foundation, 1989, (31)

'The great saint Sundardas wrote, "You have attained this human body through God's grace. You cannot attain it over and over again. This human body is a priceless jewel. Do not throw it away.'

In "QUIET MIND, FEARLESS HEART - The Taoist Path Through Stress & Spirituality" by Brian Luke Seaward, published by John Wiley & Sons, Inc., Hoboken , New Jersey, 2005, Teilhard de Chardin is quoted,

'We are not humans having a spiritual experience. Instead, we are spirits having a human experience.earthly existence is enshrouded in many veils of illusion. It is a brave soul on a noble adventure who attempts to lift these veils. If you recognize that you are indeed a spirit on a human path, then every situation that you encounter will be a learning experience. This is how consciousness evolves. The drive that inspires the human journey is a desire to have this view of life - a clearer understanding of life's mystery and role or purpose in it.'

Life itself is a miracle. This human birth is to be treasured. One needs to understand the reason for one's birth as a human being. He has to know the mission that is laid down for him. He has to come to realization of the true path. The true path should be an extremely simple one attainable by all.

And for this purpose the human body is of importance. It is needed to realize god. Although the belief that the soul/ atma/ jivatma unites with god after death of this body is held by many, saints have proved otherwise. They have shown that union has to happen and can happen right now in this body, in this very birth. Ramalinga Adigal had shown this to be possible. He had achieved this feat. He prepared himself; he purified his thoughts and body. He performed deeds that drove away ignorance and brought him merits. He yearned for god with utmost passion and god had to submit to him finally. God came unto him; into his body, into every cell and atom. Then changes started to take place in his body. Eventually he dematerialized into LIGHT merging with all in the universe. He made it happen right here and as recent as 1874. Ramalinga Adigal worked to achieve this feat. He had prepared

himself; he had purified his thoughts, and body. He had performed deeds that drove away ignorance and brought him merits. He had yearned for God with utmost passion.

Then God had to submit to him finally. God came unto him; into his body, into every cell and atom. Changes started to take place in his body. Eventually he dematerialized into light merging with God.

Search for the Divine

In the book ‘YOGI RAMSURATKUMAR - The Mystery of Becoming God’ by Olga Ammann published by Yogi Ramsuratkumar Bhavan, Mauritius, 2008, the author states,

‘The meaning and the aim of existence must be the search for the Divine. One that enables the individual to take the supreme decision of his or her life: to leave all behind and go in search of God.’

From a translation of verse 52 of Ramalinga Adigal’s ‘THIRUARUTPA’ by Valmiki Nathan, the stanza amply resembles what one should aspire for:

*O Great Effulgence of Grace
 Who, in the past without educating me in a school
 Instructed me in everything
 And removing all the foibles of the body
 Roused me from the sleep (of ignorance)’*

In J. Krishnamurti’s first work, ‘AT THE FEET OF THE MASTER’, he says,

‘In the entire world there are only two kinds of people - those who know, and those who do not know; and this knowledge is the thing which matters. What religion a man holds, to what race he belongs - these things are not important; the really important thing is this knowledge - the knowledge of God's plan for men’.

'For God has a plan and that plan is evolution. When once a man has seen that and really knows it, he cannot help working for it and making himself one with it, because it is so glorious, so beautiful. So, because he knows, he is on God's side, standing for good and resisting evil, working for evolution and not for selfishness'.

'Those who are on His side know why they are here and what they should do, and they are trying to do it; all the others do not yet know what they should do, and so they often act foolishly, and try to invent ways for themselves which they think will be pleasant for themselves, not understanding that all are one, and that therefore only what the One wills can ever be really pleasant for any one.'

'For you are God, and you will only what God wills; but you must dig deep down into yourself to find the God within you, and listen to His voice, which is your voice.'

William Doss McDavid in 'AN INTRODUCTION TO ESOTERIC PRINCIPLES' writes,

'A reform movement, encompassing all traditional esoteric orders the world over, was initiated around the time of the Lord Gautama Buddha and was brought to fruition during the life of the Tibetan

teacher Tsong-kha-pa in the fourteenth century. The reform of the occult world by his instrumentality was, in fact, the result of his great sacrifice, of the self-denial which induced him to reject the blessed condition of Nirvana to which, after his earth-life as Buddha, he was fully entitled, and undertake the burden of renewed incarnations in order to carry out more thoroughly the task he had taken in hand, and confer a correspondingly increased benefit on mankind. (Esoteric Buddhism, pp. 132-133)'.

Reform can't be brought about in one lifetime. Just as Buddha came back again and again to help perfect his reforms, Ramalinga Adigal and others too are believed to have come again and again.

The End of the Path

Marshall Govindan in his book **BABAJI AND THE TRADITION OF THE 18 SIDHARS** (Govindan, Marshall, *Babaji and the eighteen siddha Kriya Yoga tradition*, 1991, KRIYA YOGA PUBLICATIONS (REG), 196 Mountain Road, P.O.Box 90, Eastman, Quebec, Canada, JOE 1PO, <http://www.babaji.ca/>, reproduced with permission via e-mail), writes:

'In 1867, Saint Ramalingam (Ramalinga Adigal -ed) founded a house of charity to feed the poor and extend hospitality to travelers and indigent old persons in Vadalur. His mission in Vadalur has fed the poor on an extensive scale everyday for the past 132 years. The mission's kitchen fire has not gone out since it was lighted in 1870.'

'In 1870 Saint Ramalingam moved into a small hut in the hamlet of Mettukuppam, about three miles south of Vadalur. This hut is known as 'the Sacred Mansion of the Miracle' (Sithivalagam Tirumaligai).'

'In 1871, he requested his disciples to conduct 'a temple of wisdom' designed by him. They did it within six months. It was inaugurated on January 25, 1872. It has a unique design, which in its form explains symbolically the process of self-realization as experienced by Ramalinga. Seven curtains representing human passion and ignorance conceal an eternal light and various inner spaces within. Beyond all these

curtains stand a glass box, five feet high, representing the purity of the soul, and within it there burns an eternal flame, which represents the soul in its true splendor, merged with supreme grace light (Arutperumjhoti).'

'Towards the end of 1873, he placed outside the door of his room (in Sithivalagam Tirumaligai) the oil lamp that Ramalinga had been using inside. He asked his disciples to worship it and keep it burning forever. He asked them to imagine the supreme grace light manifested in it and to pray to Him for grace. He issued instructions to his disciples that except for the burning of camphor, no ritual be performed. Devotees should pray silently, filled with love of god. And enter into ecstasy.'

'On the auspicious day of January 30, 1874 at the age of 50, Ramalinga wrote and released to his devotees the following statement: "My beloved ones! I have to be out of your sight for a time. Do not worry. Keep the light of the lamp (gnana deepam) burning forever. Imagine that god is there and worship the light. You will be amply rewarded. I am in the body now and after a while; I shall enter into all the bodies of His creation. Close the door and lock it from outside. The room, if ordered to be opened, will only be void." Ramalinga then shut himself up in his room in the Mettukuppam hut. Later that night as the devotees outside the room were chanting suddenly a flash of violet light emanated from Ramalingam's room, signaling the merger of

Ramalinga into all the bodies of HIS creation. For when the room was eventually opened, it was found to be empty. Ramalinga had disappeared without a trace.”

S. Sivajayakumar in an article on the net describes this dematerialization of Ramalinga Adigal,

‘Therefore, Vallalar (Ramalinga Adigal - ed) on his own has considered it necessary to disintegrate the divine constitution and disperse the sparks in every soul as seeds are sown in the fields.’

‘When the saint closed the doors on 30.1.1874, it was evident that the saint has come in advance of a century before the evolution of the human psyche to a required level to receive the message of great life of experience of soul. Instead of spreading wisdom under one bodhi tree, the saint has planted the entire universe full of bodhi saplings. The dematerialization achieved by the Saint Vallalar on 30.1.1874 within the four walls of Siddhi Valakam is different in its entirety from the art of dematerialization practiced in other spiritual traditions. Dematerialization of a deathless body is different from that of the dematerialization of the mortal body exposed to disease and death. ... Moreover, dematerialization attained by Vallalar is not in furtherance of any worldly gains, not pursued for the welfare of the self or for the people of any particular place but for the people of this world. His dematerialization of the physical body is not for re-

materialization but to disintegrate his whole being permanently like the virtual particles which fill the cosmos.'

An article in the website <http://www.ramalinga.com> states that Mother Mira had seen, during her meditation, the happenings that took place on that Friday night when Ramalinga Adikal attained the Jhoti in Sidhivalakam. This is indeed a rare account of the mystery behind Ramalinga Adikal's disappearance.

A Vision of Dematerialization of Ramalinga's Living Body, by Gangadharan, a disciple of Mother Mira Alfassa (aid of Sri Aurobindo of Pondicherry).

'Mother Mira said that Saint Ramalinga had achieved the Mukti.'

"On the first day of the Tamil month of Thai (14-1-1978) I had a continuous vision in my usual meditation in the night: the vision of dematerialization of the physical body of Swami Ramalinga into and as the Truth-Light of Supreme Grace which contains or possesses in itself Supreme Compassion and Bliss of Grace."

"Though I have had occasions to ascend into and remain for sometime in the Truth-World of Grace-Light wherefrom I could see the earth as part of the universe, the said Vision came to me when my consciousness was on the earth itself."

“To begin with, I sensed an ineffable Silence and Peace prevailing everywhere and I heard continuously Para Nada, the mysterious divine Sound. Then the Vision broke out.”

“A small village was seen in its simple and beautiful surroundings. There was the concrete Presence of the Supreme and Universal Divine with the beautiful Truth-Light of Grace and Fragrance, which enriched the place all the more and enraptured my heart with ever increasing aspiration for Grace. At the center of the village was seen a small house. Sweet Fragrance of Grace radiated everywhere from the house.”

“Vallalar (Swami Ramalinga) was seen entering the house. His face was calm and peaceful. His whole body was radiating the Light of Grace. Besides, his body was of silken or light golden shining color. He stepped into his room, closed the doors, and bolted inside. At that time there was the Concrete Presence of the Supreme and Universal Divine in the room. The Presence could be sensed even physically and even by the born-blind. There was also Silence, Peace, Fragrance, and the Light of Grace due to the Presence.”

“Vallalar sat on a white cloth spread on a low wooden plank and began to concentrate. In that poise, he was seen as a Mountain of Truth-Knowledge with the Truth-Light of Grace and Peace and Fire of Tapas. He was verily a supreme form of the Divine. Flood of

Light was radiating from his pure and luminous body into all the directions.”

“Supreme Grace, Supreme Compassion, and the Light of Grace are expressive of the secret truth that they hold the key for transformation of physical body into the deathless physical body of Grace in its eternal youthfulness. One has to live in the depth of the ocean of blissful Grace-Light for being transformed into the divine nature and as the divine body.”

“The intensity of the flood of Light that radiated from his whole body was very powerful and one shall have the strength and capacity to bear and receive it. My whole body vibrated with a joy and pleasantness because of the Vision of Light of his body.”

“After sometime of concentration, he rose up and saw the physical sky. Full moon was shedding its blissful cool rays over the earth. A little distance away from the moon was seen a very bright dazzling star of Light. Ramalinga poured his concentrated gaze at it for sometime. He became enraptured with blissful joy in the heart, which radiated on his face. A little time thereafter, he again sat on the white seat of the plank and entered into deep concentration.”

“Though Ramalinga was inside the closed and bolted room, he could see clearly the whole universe with its tiers of many worlds of mind, life and the physical

including the physical earth and sky with its moon, stars and clouds.”

“When he was thus absorbed in deep concentration, an effulgent Truth-Light of Grace broke out from his heart and with its unique Heat began to burn his radiant physical body very slowly, as at a snail's speed, and that in an upward direction, from the heart towards the head. The burning of the body may be somewhat likened to that of an incense-stick which however burns downwards by its inner heat of fire, forming ash covering but without the falling down of the ash-form. When the upper part of his radiant body was burnt completely from heart to head, there was left in its place a form of pure white Substance, which also radiated its Light of Consciousness. The burnt part, however, showed all its features intact and clearly and even the burnt hair of his head was seen distinctly as luminous white hair. Then the Heat of the pure Light of Grace descended to burn the lower part.”

“After the whole body was thus burnt, Ramalinga was seen as a bodily form of pure white substance from head to foot, radiating its Light. The white form kept intact all the different kinds of cells of his body and all the distinctive features and formations of his interior an exterior body. His bodily form did not shrink in size after the burning. I saw no visible flame nor sensed its heat during the burning of his living body, nor smoke, nor any bad smell as of burnt tissues, nor heard any cracking noise as of burnt bones. Instead, there was

a sweet Fragrance since the time his body began to burn and it spread everywhere. I sensed in my heart an ineffable Calmness and Silence, which gave me in turn a state of Bliss.”

“Now a second stage of burning began. The unique Heat of Grace-Light began to burn slowly Ramalinga's luminous Form of White Substance from head to foot downwards. When his white Substance-Form full of its radiating Light, was thus burnt completely, the white Substance became very fine sub-atomic conscious particles, which permeated and pervaded the entire universe and the farther pure worlds of consciousness beyond. The fine, white and conscious particles with its radiating Light also entered into and got distributed everywhere in the earth and even in matter and in the Inconscient. After the universal pervasive distribution of the particles, they could be seen no more and disappeared from my sight. Now there pervaded everywhere the sweet, soft and fine Fragrance of Camphor which gave my body a blissful sensation and enraptured my heart as well.”

“Then I had the rare vision of Ramalinga's universal luminous golden Form. In fact, the immensity of his golden form contained in it the whole universe. This form too disappeared from my view and was replaced by another vision in which I saw the Golden Light of Truth-Knowledge and Grace entering into all the directions more speedily than the lightning. It permeated and pervaded the whole universe and the

farther pure worlds of Consciousness. It entered into our earth and all its crores of the physical forms of beings and objects and in the apparently insensible matter and even in the very dark realm of the vast in conscience. All the forms that were permeated by the Golden Light of Truth changed into golden forms of beings and objects. The Golden Light entered into my whole adhara including the physical body. My body felt in all the cells vibrations of ease and pleasantness.”

“Then I heard some words of Grace. However, they were indistinctly heard and could not be deciphered, as I was absorbed in a rapture of Bliss due to the sublime vision and experiences. Thus, the Vision lasted an hour of time and ended.”

“The visible physical light is the concrete symbol of the Vast Truth-Light of Grace, which is the source of all lights. Camphor is verily a solid form or symbol of that Light. Ramalinga's soul is inseparable from the conscious white particles of Substance, which he has become, and pervading distributed everywhere. When the Supreme Truth-consciousness manifests in the physical world, it becomes the golden Light of Grace. The golden Light of Grace will purify and transform man and the physical body too will become deathless physical Truth-body, and the Sanmarga of Truth, Purity, and Goodness shall prevail on the earth. As Anma realizes the pure Spirits, the body too shall realize its truth as the true body of the Spirit.”

Be Grateful

Many of the present day saints have extolled the efficacy of songs of saints of days bygone that arose out of extreme devotion. The “THIRUMANTHIRAM” of the Sidha Tirumoolar, the “THEVARAM” of the Nalvar, the “THIRUPUGAZH” of the Sidha Arunagiri and the numerous songs by the Sidhas all have helped bring about the right mood whereby even the toughest heart is mellowed down.

N. Mahalingam in the forward to a translation of the book LEADING A LIFE OF COMPASSION TOWARDS ALL LIVING BEINGS by S. Sethu mentions,

‘When mercy is practiced the melting of the soul of human beings towards other living beings, takes place, then the soul goes on blossoming and blossoming. As a result grace which is God’s manifestation in the soul will emerge out and shine fully. When that occurs, divine Bliss or Supreme Bliss is experienced. After full perfection the experience becomes full. The process of that experience blossoming into absolute perfection is called Godhood. When the process is complete man is no different from God.’

Only when the heart melts can man see through this veil of Maya or ignorance. Ramalinga Adigal mentions seven veils that need to be removed before one enters that state of realization - seeing God in oneself and other beings too.

Ramalinga Adikal walked the path of the Sidhas and revealed his experiences as songs. In these songs he depicts his journey and the transformation he underwent from external worship into internal worship and beyond. These songs portray his transformation from man to divine and to LIGHT. He poured forth his experiences in more than six thousand verses which were compiled into the “THIRU ARUTPA.”

Such was the grace of Ramalingam Adikal that he chose to give us the “THIRUARUTPA” that intoxicates the reader with bliss. The “THIRUARUTPA” is full of the experiences of the Adikal and he has handed it down to us so that we too could follow his footsteps. My guru Tavayogi Thangarasan Adikal of the Sri Agathiyar Gnana Peedham, Kallar, Kovai once told me listening to the “THIRUARUTPA” itself is sufficient for one to realize Gnanam.

Swami Chidvilasananda could not have described this better in “INNER TREASURES” a Siddha Yoga Publication, 1995, (32)

‘What you are reading in the scriptures is the personal record, the experience of seekers who went across the sea of ignorance. They became known as the sages, the knower of the truth, the great ones, and the elevated ones. You are reading the wisdom that came from all their effort, inspiration, and sacrifice. These verses are what they heard when they reached the most profound states of meditation. So, when you study the scriptures, what you are really doing is spending time in the company of these great souls.’

Swami Chidvilasananda adds that Tukaram Maharaj chanted incessantly, pouring all the insights of his perfected sadhana into songs. Ramalinga Adigal did just that.

Swami Muktananda told Ram Dass, quoted from “PATHS TO GOD – Living the Bhagavad-Gita”, Harmony Books, 2004,

“You see, you have to understand: the Gita isn’t a book about Krishna - the Gita is Krishna.”

Similarly the “THIRUARUTPA” is Ramalingam. Ramalingam is the “THIRUARUTPA”.

Ramalinga Adigal had poured his gratefulness to the Almighty in all his songs. He goes away from the usual explanation where the soul unites (yogam) with the Lord upon death. It is usually thought that this union takes place eventually with or without effort, the time taken depending on the amount of effort directed towards it. But Ramalinga Adigal says we have to bring the Lord into us. That means preparing this body to receive the Lord and eventually place him permanently in the various organs itself. That is the only way to remain alive and overcome death.

Ramalinga Adigal stood out as an exemplary with regards to gratitude. He started worshipping Murugan at the Kandasamy (Kandakottam) temple in Chennai and Thirutani, Shiva in Otriyoore, and Nadaraja in Chidambaram. Later he started the following establishments; the Sanmarga Sangam, the Sathya Dharma Salai where he fed the poor, envisioned and built the Sathya Gnana Sabai in Vadalur where he worshipped god in the form of LIGHT and called him

Arutperunjhoti. He finally settled in Sithivalagam in Mettukupam where he dematerialized.

Towards Union with God

G.Valmikanathan in his book ‘MAKERS OF INDIAN LITERATURE-RAMALINGAM’, published by Sahitya Akademi (e-book at <http://www.vallalar.org>) traces Ramalinga Adigal’s journey on the pathway to God dividing it into three portions; journey on the purgative way, journey on the illuminative way, and journey on the unitive way.

He explains further;

“The purgative way is that part of the long path which, one treads towards the godhead and in which one purges oneself of all desires and attachments, of all imperfections, of all acts of commission and omission of shortcomings in renunciation, of shortcomings in the total love of god in the passion for the apprehension of the godhead”.

“The illuminative way is that part of the path, which comes after the purgative way, and in which one gains illumination, knowledge, and gnosis”.

“The unitive way is that part of the pathway in which the pilgrim marches on with buoyant and joyous steps, filled with hope and freed from doubt or misconception. The journey is characterized by a sense of urgency. The pilgrim, in this part of his journey, begins to walk fast, then breaks into a loping trot, and finally, gallops on with increasing tempo towards the beckoning smile and the outstretched arms, and is

soon locked in an eternal embrace with the beloved, the eternal being, the godhead, the ground of all being. The journey on the unitive way is composed of several factors of experience. Recollection and quiet, contemplation, ecstasy and rapture, dark night of the soul, and unitive life”.

“Of these three sections of the pathway, the first is painful and dolorous, the second a strange mixture of sorrow and joy, the joy increasing in intensity as ignorance is slowly replaced by illumination, and the last section of sheer delight, of mounting bliss”.

In the website, <http://www.ramalinga.com>, an extensive explanation is given on what happens during the union between God and man.

‘Ramalinga affirms that, following the Divine Path of Truth and Purity, the most impure body will become a body pure and imperishable’.

‘Then the Divinity descends and settles in disciples’ Heart, who becomes entirely filled by Him. Captivated by the “Ardent Fire” of the Divine Essence, the disciple stops thinking, feeling, acting and even existing. He has become pure LOVE and COMPASSION, and this is what he spills on all the beings’.

“This Secret, which has been hidden and now is divulged according to the explicit wish of Ramalinga,

points the disciple's Heart as **the End of the Path** showed by Him'.

'To say "Heart" isn't referring to the physical heart neither the heart chakra, although its "location" is near to both of them. The Heart is the most pure and hidden place, only "stepped" by God. Ramalinga himself revealed this Secret in this verse:

The Boundless Benevolent Jothi abides in the Heart of those who have realized the Deathless Body as clearly as the fruit in their hands'.

'He described a "Principle of Light" that is the unique one capable of producing this first transformation'.

'This Principle has two important aspects: Compassion toward all the beings (paropakaram) and devotional Meditation (satvicharam)'.

'According to Ramalinga, the first of these aspects was the most important; if is acquired, the Grace will come easily. God is present in all the beings and all the beings are in God. Cultivating the human compassion for all the beings can be achieved the God's Grace (divine Compassion), similarly to the way in which a spark becomes a radiant Light'.

'Likewise he taught that it was necessary to develop another aspect of the Principle of Light: the ardent Devotion to God. The key is constituted by the

constant thought on God, begging for his Grace. In one of his poems he expresses that is necessary to think incessantly on God, until be melted with the Divine Love. Then the crying happens unexpectedly and praises are sung to God, being produced in the disciple a smooth internal heat'.

'When this universal Love and this sacred Heat are realized, body and soul are prepared for the descent of the Grace in the shape of Light. When this happens, the material body constituted of impure elements is transformed into a "Body of Pure Light" that emits a golden brightness'.

Various Bodies

G. Vanmikanathan in his English translation of the “TIRUVACAGAM” published by Amudha Nilayam, Chennai, 2002, says, (G.Vanmikanathan, 2002)

‘The temple has usually five prahaarams i.e. courtyards separated by high walls and inter-connected by entrances, four in number, on the East, West, North and South in the outermost wall, and only one on each of the other walls, usually on the eastern section thereof.’

‘These five courtyards represent the five sheaths of a human body viz., the annamaya kola, the pranamaya kosa, the manomaya kosa the vignanamaya kosa and the anandamaya kosa.’

Ramalinga Adigal had sung on the various bodies. Swami Saravanandananda has written an extensive explanation in his English transliteration of Ramalinga Adigal’s “ARUTPERUNJHOTI AGAVAL” published by Ramalinga Mission, Madras. The Swami writes, when one gains illumination of effulgence (Arutperunjhathi) his body becomes a pure or golden body,

‘At whatever age the aspirant gains illumination or the effulgence enters in him or emanates from within, some remarkable changes take place in the body-frame. The Divine Light seems to change the very cell of the body, with the result, that they seem to function in the opposite direction. Consequently, the old body

becomes middle aged, then to youth of eighteen years, to twelve years (pure body), to eight years and finally five years (Pranava body). After five years the body grows to the size of the universe to become casual body or a body of gnosis (Gnana deham) which is the natural abode of the soul.'

'With the descent of sufficient Divine Light the psychic head begins to emerge. According to Vallalar, this psychic head (a crown or diadem of light) is made up of a special and highly refined type of brain called Omkar brain. As soon as it emerges, it draws more cosmic light; the more the light the greater the growth of the psychic head. With the advent of psychic head, more and more changes take place in the already purified body. The cells and thence the whole body begins to transcend the limits imposed on them by impure Maya (the grosser principle of nature) and try to break one more of its veils. The cells undergo alternate condensation and expansion for an unspecified period and the body slowly emerges out of its bondage and begins to grow. This expanding and ever prospering body, is called the subtle body or the body of Omkar or Pranava body.'

Swami Saravanandananda adds,

'With this perfection comes perfect knowledge. He (Vallalar) also seemed to have been bestowed with the third eye, after his body had attained perfection. This third eye enabled him to gain knowledge of the whole

universe and all the individual beings contained in it. He asserts that his knowledge penetrated and pervaded layer upon layer of the varied types of universes., With the functioning of the third eye, the transformation of the Pranava body is completed and the next and final stage of transformation into the Gnostic body (Gnana deham) starts. As explained by Vallalar, the person whose third eye is active is verily God Himself because he can raise the dead into life and perform the fivefold primordial functions.'

According to Ramalinga Adigal, it takes a long time to perfect the Pranava body; the minimum period required is twelve years and the maximum is 108 years, writes Swami Saravanananda.

'The transformation of the Pranava body into a Gnostic body begins with the functioning of the third eye. With the advent of this eye, the body sheds whatever subtle impurities it possesses; consequently, it becomes nearly invisible. The third eye enabled Vallalar to have tier upon tier of divine experiences.'

'Slowly his body through the intensity of concentration of the mind begins to generate the flame of lapses, popularly known as psychic heat. Slowly the quantity of psychic heat is increased due to intense meditation and concentration on the universal effulgence. The extreme heat generated in the body produces smoke at first; this smoke gathers up in volume and escapes through the junction of the parietal bones of the skull (Brahma Randhra). During

this period, the body and mind undergoes untold stress. Vallalar often mentions about the sufferings that he had undergone since he was twelve years old. The psychic smoke clears off and enhanced illumination results. This light (Tegas) is also called as the aura or nimbus.'

Marshall Govindan in his book "BABAJI AND THE 18 SIDDHARS KRIYA YOGA TRADITION" (Govindan, Marshall, Babaji and the Eighteen Siddha Kriya Yoga Tradition, 1991, Kriya Yoga Publications (Reg), 196 Mountain Road, P.O.Box 90, Eastman, Quebec, Canada, JOE 1PO, reproduced with permission via e-mail), says, (Govindan, 1991)

'Ramalinga described several successive transformations:

The transformation of the mortal human body into the perfect body (suddha deham), achieved by universal spiritual communion and devotion to god;

The transformation of perfect body (sudha deham) into the body of grace and light (pranava deham);

In addition, the transformation into the body of wisdom (Gnana deham) and into the body of god supreme.'

'In many verse (in the Thiru Arutpa – ed) Ramalinga sings of how his 'impure body' of 'impure elements' was transformed into a pure body of pure elements, called a golden body of immeasurable carats (swarna deham). He sings that one has to think incessantly, until he feels and melts with love for god. In such a melting mood one bursts into tears and sings praise of god and soothing warmth is produced in the aspirant. When this universal love and sacred warmth develops, the body as well as the soul became prepared for the descent of the grace, in the form of light. When this occurs, the material body of impure elements is transformed into a 'body of pure light', emitting a golden hue. This 'golden body' appears to be about twelve years of age. The body of grace (pranava deham) according to him can be seen visually but it cannot be touched. It appears to be a heavenly child of about five to eight years of age. The ultimate and greatest transformation in human evolution: a transmutation into the godhead, which he referred to as merging with the body of supreme wisdom- the body of god supreme (Gnana deham).'

In the foreword to Kumara Devar in Marshall Govindan's "BABAJI AND THE 18 SIDDHARS KRIYA YOGA TRADITION" (Govindan, Marshall, Babaji and the Eighteen Siddha Kriya Yoga Tradition, 1991, Kriya Yoga Publications (Reg), 196 Mountain Road, P.O.Box 90, Eastman, Quebec, Canada, JOE 1PO, <http://www.babaji.ca>, reproduced with permission via e-mail), it was stated again, (Govindan, 1991)

'This saint, Kumara Devar, (the author of Sudha Sadhagam – ed), has sung of the progressive transformation of the darkness abounding human body (Irul deham) into delusive body (Marul deham) then into the Pranava Deham which could be seen and felt. In an advanced state it is transformed into body off grace (Arul deham), which could only be seen as a mirage or a rainbow, but with his grace, it merges with Shiva and enjoys eternal bliss in shivadvaita union.'

Dr C Srinivasan, in his foreword to Ramalingam Swami, in the same book says,

'Accordingly, the impure human body, susceptible to disease and death, can, by the grace of god, be transformed into a pure and perfect body of love, then into a celestial body of grace and ultimately into an invisible body of bliss and merge with god supreme.'

In the foreword to "AN INTRODUCTION TO THE PHILOSOPHY OF SAINT RAMALINGAM" by Dr. C. Srinivasan, Rao Saheb K. Kothandapani Pillai BA says: (Srinivasan)

'These transformations occur in the body of the aspirant according to the intensity of spiritual warmth produced in him. The body is deprived of all its dross or impurities and made pure, fit for divine absorption (sudha deham). These are the practical transformation, which came over the body of the Swami stage by stage on the way to union with the absolute. Not only did he preach this science of

deathlessness (sudha sanmarga) but actually attained this deathless state. None of the four saints, [Appar, Sundarar, Thirugnanasambanthar, and Manickavasagar] dropped their bodies on the earth nor was buried or burnt. They bodily vanished into the ether or into the lord divine. Conquest of death by imbibing supreme grace is the quintessence of his philosophy. The more he ascended in his holy pursuit the more was the descent of divinity in him.'

Table 2: The Various Bodies As Explained By Ramalinga Adigal And The Experiences Gained.

Types Of Bodies			Experiences Gain Through This Body
Equivalent In English	In Tamil	Also Known As	
Body Of Love	Sudha Deham	Anbu Uru	Uyir Anubhavam
Body Of Grace	Pranava Deham	Arul Uru	Arul Anubhavam
Body Of Bliss	Gnana Deham	Enba Uru	Siva Anubhavam

In an article in the net, the author of the article says,

'As an individual begins to be liberated from the influence of the mind-stuff, the divine attributes of the atman or self manifest in the very subtle sheath of bliss (anandamaya kosham) that surrounds the soul

(atman.). When the transformation of that very subtle part of the being has been given fully to the divine, the individual becomes literally a beacon of bliss-light. Simply being in the presence of such a being is uplifting. Such an elevated individual is often acknowledged as a saint.'

'Anyone whose spiritual practices have thus resulted in the awareness of the divine working through them has already begun the transformational process and surrendering of the sheath of the intellect (vinjanamaya kosham). When the analytical or intellectual component of the being is fully informed by the divine light attributes we may through the divine grace be in a position to recognize such a being as the Sage that they are. Such an individual is truly a muni or one who has had their accumulated experiences and knowledge enlightened by the higher deeper aspects of self. Such Sage has digested and integrated the informed divine light into the analytical aspects of the being.'

'As the intellect undergoes this transformation, the mental sheath (manomaya kosham), associated with the senses, and is similarly transformed. Of course, this individual is fully aware of the Divine as the prime mover. Since the ego has been given to the divine, every action related to the senses is observed and understood to be none other than the indwelling god or goddess doing the experiencing and enjoying. Such a Buddha can enjoy all the senses without fear of

confusion or being lost spiritually in them. For the great tantric who have attained to this state, conventional rules which guide and provide stability, safety, and structure are irrelevant.'

'As the divine light descends into the sheath of energy (pranayama kosham) the entity becomes a siddha in the truest sense of the word. As defined in the Upanishads, a siddha is one who has progressed from the exalted 'state of freed while living' (jivanmukta) to 'supremely free with full power over death' (para mukta). This state is referred to in siddhantha literature as soruba mukti or soruba Samadhi. This para mukta will rarely retain the transformed physical frame and when so, remains as an avatar. The physical body of the siddha glows with the fire of immortality.'

The Transformation of the Body

From <http://www.ramalinga.com>

'Describing in exquisite way the phases of the transformation of his body, Ramalinga says that dermis and epidermis have become extremely soft; all the nerves, muscles and tendons have slackened little by little; the bones, membranes and cartilages have become very flexible; the blood has coagulated; the semen has concentrated being solidified; the brain and all its parts have been opened like a bud. All over the body an Elixir flows; the face glistens; the respiration is smooth and refreshing; from the tear glands abundant tears sprout; the mouth is half-opened tremulous and the ears are filled of sweet melodies. The entire body is refreshed and all its visible parts flourish in ecstasy. The heart swells palpitating Love. The ego vanishes, as the emotional and mental defects. A tender, loving and compassionate quietude dominates the entire organism. The ardent desire to receive the divine Grace overflows. The Supreme Love fills the body, which is the temple of the divine Life'.

The Perfected Body

From <http://www.ramalinga.com>,

“I have realized here the triple indestructible body of *Suddha Deha* (the pure physical body), a perpetual and blissful *Pranava* body (*Pranava Deha*) and an all-pervading and ever-growing or ever-prospering Knowledge-body of the divine Conscious Force (*Jnana Deha*) in order to make the play of self-giving of myself everywhere”.

“The Lord revealed me the chain of Cause and Effect that are spoken of in the respective scriptures of the Vedas and Agamas. I have seen and realized Him here in the world and enjoy the Bliss. I have happily partaken of *Amrita* (of Bliss) in the Realm where there is neither day nor night (the Truth World of eternal Light)”.

“I have discarded all the devious ways and taken to the good Path of Purity, Truth and Harmony, and joined the rank and file of Its Sangha or fellowship. The heavenly beings happily praise it as the Good Path, because it has a firm foundation”.

“Oh my shy people of the world! Be careful to see that your heart remains vigilant and watchful without allowing it to indulge in wastefulness (wasting the opportunity). As the Lord has given me today Amrita

of Bliss as food, know it to be the day which He has chosen for His manifestation here in the play of Knowledge and Perfection”.

Union With God

From <http://www.ramalinga.com>

‘Beyond the experience of the Divinity that can be achieved through the Ajna and the Sahasrara, the full Union with God in body and soul (deathless body) takes place when the Most High Lord accepts the absolute surrender of the disciple’.

‘These great saints saw a Column of Light rising above the Sahasrara up to the Divinity. In one who realizes the Golden Deathless Body an indissoluble bond is established with the Divinity through this Column of Light. Till this moment, one must make an effort ascending to the Divinity, later having to descend again to the physical level, nevertheless on having been settled the Column of Light one does not need to continue doing this effort, but from this time the Divinity descends on oneself. The Column of Light starts to be formed in the states previous to the full Realization of Golden Body’.

‘The one in whom the Column of Light is settled enjoy the continual experience on the Divinity, who, on having descended, resides in one’s own Heart (as shining Sun) and fills with Himself the whole Being gradually, even the physical body (which, cell by cell, is completely transmuted up to becoming divine). At first the above mentioned experience has not the same

intensity all the time. Moved by His great Compassion, God takes the maximum care of the possible after effect in the physical body and that's why He is alternating the intensity to manifest Himself as Divine Light. Some times His resplendence is very soft whereas in other occasions It becomes the most intense, seeming that one is going to be melted in It. This experience on God fills the Self with Divine Love and Compassion, which overflow from the Heart as a river flowing endlessly towards the other beings'.

'Little by little, God is increasing by degrees the intensity of Light and one is becoming accustomed to it, until the time comes when God manifests Himself wholly. Then the Column of Light shines from beginning to end with Its entire splendor. It isn't visible, except in very rare occasions'.

'This Column of Light is truly the embodied Divine Jothi, which burns constantly so that the Divine Light radiates coming to all the beings. This is the Full God's Manifestation in the Earth'.

'There was no longer the body, no longer any sensation; there was only a Column of Light rising from the place where is ordinarily the base of the body up to the place where is ordinarily the head, to form there a disk of Light like that of the moon; then from there the Column went on rising up to very far above the head to break into an immense Sun, dazzling and

multi-colored, from which fell a rain of Golden Light covering the whole earth'.

'Then slowly the Column of Light descended forming an oval of living Light, awakening and setting in motion, each in a particular way, according to a special mode of vibration, the centers which were above the head, at the place of the head, the throat, the heart, in the middle of the belly, at the base of the spine and still lower. At the height of the knees, the ascending and the descending currents joined together and the circulation thus became in a way uninterrupted enveloping the whole being in an immense oval of living Light'.

'Then slowly the consciousness descended from stage to stage, halting at every world, till the consciousness of the body came back. The resumption of the consciousness of the body was, if my memory is exact, the ninth stage. At this moment the body was still quite stiff and immobile'.

'There is a Pillar (Column of Light) rising up from the seat of Brahma (muladhara), above the Sahasrara, and reaching up to Suddha Siva Sthana, the seat of Suddha Siva (the pure Space of the Divine which is the world of True Knowledge). It will be of the vibration of Vayu (air of life-force called Vayu Nadi) up to the Heart centre and beyond that, of the principle of Agni the fire. It is broad at the bottom and becomes finer and finer as it goes up. It is invisible to senses as it becomes

infinitesimally atomic; it is imperceptible to the jeeva as it becomes infinite, and can be seen only rarely in spiritual vision. It is the Pillar of Unity without division. This is called the whole and perfect Pillar of the Divine Form, Sivakara Poorna Stambha'.

"The human is oblivious of many original capacities, which will come to be awoken again by the Grace Light, and taken up to the sublimation. No doubt, open your heart to me. Be trusted and what seems to be impossible will be realized. Believe that my words are the Supreme Truth".